

CHRISTINE REBET TIGER ESCAPE

17 November - 30 December 2006

Kamel Mennour is pleased to present « Tiger Escape » Christine Rebet's second solo exhibition at the Gallery.

Christine Rebet conjures together production, the subconscious and drawing. The young French artist has built up a surrealist and highly personal world in her drawings and animated films, suggestive of automatic writing. She brings to life bizarre heroes in choreographies that verge on the theatre of the absurd. Expressed in painting, animated sequences and film, the central subjects of Christine Rebet's research are theatre, imbalance, disintegration, the search for identity and metamorphosis.

The basis of this project is a tragic event that took place at the turn of the 20th century on Coney Island, New York. Due to an unfortunate incident, in the space of a few hours the Dreamland amusement park was completely destroyed by fire. The accident was a tragic reminder of « Fighting the Flames », Dreamland's star attraction, during which firefighters bravely put out a fire raging in a hotel, having evacuated the spectators from the six-story building. But this time the *Dreamland* fire wasn't staged. The real version outshone the spectacular, feigned version.

Rebet revisits the imaginary setting of the drama and presents us, through a series of drawings (ink on paper) with the first act, played by an imaginary cast of Dreamland's missing characters: the public, actors, employees, and animals.

The video animation « *Tell me about your dreams* » (filmed in 16mm) portrays an exchange between two Dreamland performers: a tiger-turned-psychoanalyst and his young patient. Their conversation analyzes their disillusion with the profession, and the concept of Utopia. The second installation represents the cyclical, mechanical escape of the fireman-actor in « Fighting the flames ». The automaton has been conceived as a plastic toy on a revolving axis.

These two installations evoke an incessant mechanism oscillating between the burlesque and the carnivalesque, confronting the tragedy of an event with its consequences. The concept recalls the theory of the pre-Socratic philosopher Zeno, member of the Eleatic School founded by Parmenides. The inventor of dialectics, Zeno is known above all for his paradoxes, in which he tries to prove the immobility of movement.

In the paradox described in Book XI of *The Iliad and the Odyssey*, the character of Heracles continually fires an arrow from his bow, whilst forever remaining static. This act, ordained to be repeated *ad infinitum*, resembles the « immobile movement » experienced in dreams: despite incessant mental activity, the hero is condemned to rest frozen in space and time.

The sound space of the exhibition evolves with the flow of the mythical story of *Tiger Escape*, in a musical ballad involving a far-off actor and a spectator narrating the drama. The « show machine » also generates musical sounds orchestrated by an unstructured and liberated melody. The visual and aural conjunction that the exhibition creates evokes the magical phenomena of the very earliest musical cartoons, where each image was designed to correspond to a sound. The imaginary, acousmatic animation of *Tiger Escape* presents the now disappeared actors of Dreamland, characters full of desire, in a scenario that puts desire in its proper place.

Christine Rebet « Tiger Escape » is on show at galerie kamel mennour
Tuesdays to Saturdays, 11am to 7pm.

For further information, please contact Marie-Sophie Eichê, Jessy Mansuy-Leydier and Emma-Charlotte Gobry-Laurencin.